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EXPOSE SATAN WITH SCRIPTURE

"Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm...Take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God," (Eph. 6:13,17). No soldier would be completely armed and ready for battle without brandishing a sword for combat. But merely having one by your side wouldn't be nearly enough. What good would a sword do for a soldier who was not skilled in using it? In the same way, Christians must be skilled in the use of the scriptures for this weapon to be effectively used in battle. *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth," (2 Tim. 2:15).* Constant time spent in exercises familiarizing ourselves with the Word is

necessary for us to develop the skilled use of it in combat. *"For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil," (Heb. 5:13-14).* *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect," (Rom. 12:2).* Once a Christian soldier becomes equipped with the skills necessary to handle the Word accurately, the sword of the Word of God becomes a potent weapon in defending themselves from the deceptive nature of Satan's temptations. From the Garden of Eden to our present day, Satan has used a cunning arsenal of deceptive

manipulation to achieve his evil purposes. Using a deadly combination of casting doubt and attributing evil intent on God Himself, Satan's attacks are effectively thwarted with the defensive capabilities of the Sword of the Spirit. Jesus demonstrated how effective this sword is when He used scripture to defend Himself against Satan's attempts to cast doubt and evil intent towards the goodness of the character of Jesus' Father. When Satan attempted to depict God as someone who carelessly and unnecessarily allowed Jesus to suffer with hunger, Jesus quoted scripture. *"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,'"* (Mt. 4:4). When Satan attempted to convince Jesus that he had a much easier and better way than God of being handed all the kingdoms of the world, Jesus quoted scripture. *"It is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God and serve Him only,'"* (Lk. 4:8). When Satan attempted to cast doubt on God's existence and full power by daring Jesus to hurl Himself off the top of the temple, Jesus quoted scripture. *"It is said, 'You shall not put the LORD your God to the test,'"* (Lk. 4:12). Jesus skillfully used the

sword of the Spirit to cut through the deceptive nature of Satan's attacks on God, exposing the devil as a liar and deceiver and revealing the ultimate goodness of God as revealed through scripture. Using the sword of the Spirit in this defensive manner protecting ourselves from the devil's temptations, we not only maintain our own faith and obedience as faithful soldiers, but we gain a better understanding and ability to offensively use the sword in an effort to remove others from sin by convicting them with the Truth. Jesus used the sword in this manner as well, exposing the dangers and consequences of our sins with a direct application of the scriptures. *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for*

People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



Prophet Isaiah's Personal Seal Found

The impression of Prophet Isaiah's personal seal may have been found in Jerusalem. Excavations in the Ophel – an area just below the Temple Mount – found the seal mark, called a bulla, in undisturbed Iron Age remains, just 3 meters (10 feet) from where the bulla of King Hezekiah of Judah was found in 2015. The extraordinary object, which is estimated to be around 2,700 years old, was found by Dr. Eilat Mazar of the Hebrew University. She reported on her discovery in the Biblical Archaeology Review magazine. "We appear to have discovered a seal impression, which may have belonged to the prophet Isaiah, in a scientific archaeological excavation," Mazar wrote. The finders believe the bulla was discovered in situ – undisturbed all this time – outside what had been the ancient kingdom's royal bakery. Half an inch wide, the bulla bears the name Yesha'yah[u] (the Hebrew name of Isaiah) in ancient Hebrew script, followed by the letters N-V-Y – which are the three first letters of the word for prophet (navi, spelled nun-beit-yod-aleph). Isaiah's period was also that of King Hezekiah, the 12th king of the Kingdom of Judah, who ruled from around 727 B.C.E. to around 698 B.C.E. Mazar points out that finding the bulla of the prophet right by that of the king "should not come as a surprise," given their symbiotic relationship as described in the Bible. Hezekiah had been essentially a vassal king of the Assyrian ruler Sennacherib. The Jews, however, rebelled. The rebellion did not go well initially, and the Assyrians counterattacked, besieging Jerusalem in 701 B.C.E. The mightily upset king then sought counsel from his prophet. "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet son of Amoz came to him..." Is. 38:1



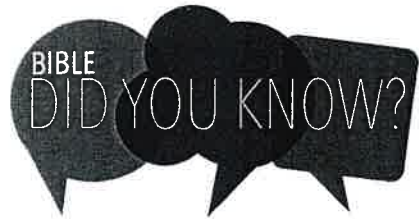
your whole body to go into hell," (Mt. 5:27-30).

Something which might help us to handle the sword offensively in the most efficient and skillful way would be a reminder of how sharp the sword is. *"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart," (Heb. 4:12).* Usually

when someone warns you that something you are handling is extremely sharp, it elicits a sense of extreme caution and care. The surgeon's scalpel is such a sharp instrument that while it is certainly sharp enough to cut through the body to allow work to be done on our inner organs, it is handled with such extreme care knowing that it is also so sharp that it has the ability to cut and hurt parts of the body unintentionally if not handled carefully enough. The sword God equips us with is so sharp, it would do us well to handle it with the same sense of extreme caution and care, recognizing that while it is sharp enough to cut deep into our sin, if not handled carefully, is also sharp enough to unnecessarily cut and damage things like courage, confidence

and zeal in the process. *"The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will," (2 Tim. 2:24-26).*

– Daniel Ruegg



The grace of God trains us to put away sin. "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,"
Titus 2:11-13